

CLASSIFICATION SECRET/CONTROL - U.S. OFFICIALS ONLY
SECURITY INFORMATION

INFORMATION REPORT REPORT
REFERENCE COPY CD NO.

SUBJECT The Belene Forced Labor Camp

NO. OF PAGES 9

NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)

PLACE
ACQUIRED Turkey,

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

General Description.

50X1-HUM

1. The Belene forced labor camp is located near the village of Belene (M4340 E2506), Svishtov Okolina (District). As of September 1951, there were approximately 5,000 inmates. The major part of the camp is located on Ostrov Perun (Perun Island) in the Danube River. The island is connected with the mainland by a pontoon bridge. A single-track branch railroad line connects Belene (railroad station Levski) with Svishtov, approximately ten miles distant, and with the Sofia-Pleven-Stalin railroad line.

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2. The camp is composed of five units, which will hereafter be referred to as compounds, bearing the numbers 1-5. Compounds 1-4 are located on the island, while No. 5 is on the mainland.

3. Compound 1, on the island, contains approximately 1,200 men. Until new sleeping quarters were constructed during the summer of 1951, only 400 of the inmates of this compound could sleep in the dormitory, the remaining 800 bedding down in the open. The work in this compound consists of farm labor: raising wheat, corn and sunflowers, and building sleeping quarters for the camp. The workday is fourteen hours, with reveille at 4:30 a.m., and one hour for lunch. All work units consist of teams of fifty men under the leadership of a trusty who is generally one of the officials of the World War II government interned in the camp. When an inmate does not complete his assigned quota for the day, he is turned in by the trusty. As a result, he is beaten and is usually not seen for a day or so.

[illegible]

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4. Compound 2 has the least number of inmates and the unfavorable working conditions occasion frequent deaths among the inmates. The prisoners in this compound are divided into two groups. Those in the first group, including high officers from the former police, Army, and other branches of the government, are fenced in behind barbed wire and do not go out to work. The second group goes out to work on the dikes. The two groups do not have any contact with each other. 50X1-HUM
5. Compound 3 had 700-800 inmates in the summer of 1951, who worked in the vegetable gardens. During November 1951, the inmates of Compound 3 were moved to Compound 1. After this move, a rumor circulated that 100-150 female prisoners had been moved into Compound 3.
6. Compound 4, situated approximately two to three kilometers from Compound 1, is closest to the bridge to the mainland. The 1500 inmates of this compound are generally former officers, policemen, government officials, and people who were prominent in public life. Some of these men are charged with the care and feeding of pigs, while others, mostly government officials of the World War II era, work in the camp administration offices.
7. Compound 5, on the mainland, has approximately 700-800 inmates who work in a brickyard.
8. The building closest to the Danube, on the shore, is the Camp Administration Building. In the immediate vicinity of this building are a number of dormitories for the guards.
- Guards and Discipline.
9. The camp is guarded by the Militia, and the whole area is honeycombed with watch towers, some of which are equipped with machine guns. The entrance to the camp proper, on Persin Island, is guarded by armed Militiamen on a 24-hour basis. 50X1-HUM
10. [redacted] names and short descriptions of two camp officials. One, a Major Kitov, was described as the camp commandant. When the work norms were not fulfilled, as was quite often the case, Kitov spoke to the inmates, making all kinds of threats. They were told that they were "vermin" and incorrigible "enemies of the people", that they would rot in the camp while, as he said, "You wait for the Americans and the English to come and liberate you. You'll have to wait a long time before you are able to turn your faces to the light. Don't expect that someone will do anything for you, or interest himself in you. No, you will be here until the Last Judgement." In this way, he attempted to break the will and the spirit of the prisoners.
11. The only other prison official known by name [redacted] was Boris Mitev, political supervisor in Compound 1. He is described as a cruel degenerate. Whenever one of the camp inmates was guilty of some insignificant act, Mitev would order him to sit erect in his shirt sleeves the whole night outside the building in the cold. 50X1-HUM
12. [redacted] the exact nature of the camp's disciplinary enclosure. [redacted] a section of the camp known as "Tel-Aviv" which serves as the camp's disciplinary enclosure. Those sent to "Tel-Aviv" for punishment are given a ration of 100 grams of bread and one glass of Danube River water per day. [redacted] for breaking the rules men are thrown into a dungeon which is in Compound 2 behind barbed wire. There a man is given only a piece of bread, some water, and a blanket. The dungeon is in the ground without any kind of windows. The prisoner remains there, his health broken, for at least ten days. 50X1-HUM

Living Conditions and Work.

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13. After 20 December 1951, a new regime was instituted. Inmates were divided into three categories. The first category included the group which was behind barbed wire (Group 1 of Compound 2). This group was permitted to receive a ten-kilogram food package and a letter every four months. Those in the second category were allowed a ten-kilogram food package and a letter every three months. The final category was permitted the food package and letter every two months. All categories

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were permitted to receive a package of clothing every three months. Before this new regulation, the prisoners had been allowed to write to their families twice a month and say that they were in a camp, and to receive a ten-kilogram food package once per month. Letters could be received twice a month. Receipt of unlimited quantities of clothing was also allowed before the new regulation went into effect.

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14. While most of the work allotted to the Belene inmates is agricultural (there are approximately 20,000 acres, or 80,000 (sic) decares, under cultivation on Persin Island), there are also many building, hauling and loading tasks. In one group, the working norm is four cubic meters of earth per day. In order to exhaust the prisoners more, the earth is not removed by carts, but is carried away on flat wooden containers between two poles which two men carry as they would a stretcher. This means that during one day, two prisoners have to dig out, load and carry a horizontal distance of fifty meters and up a height of two or three meters, eight cubic meters of earth, that is, twelve tons. The prisoner who fails to meet his norm is pointed out as a saboteur. Such "inciters" or "instigators" are sent off to a dungeon "to be reformed".
15. The prisoners work every day without any rest days and in spite of bad weather. No breakfast is provided. For lunch and supper soup, which might better be called "slop", is distributed. The soup consists of water and a few vegetables and beans, without any fats whatsoever. In December, because the work was heavier, a little jam was sometimes handed out for breakfast. A frequent sight is that of a prisoner eating raw green leaves and roots. To be caught doing this, however, would result in ten days' detention in a dungeon for such an "offense". For heavy work 700 grams of bread per day is issued; for ordinary manual labor, 500 grams; and for the ill and those who do not work, 300 grams.
16. The prisoners have no money with which to supplement these rations or make purchases. They are, however, given coupons on which is written:

T.V.O.

c. BELENE - SVISHT.

50X1-HUM

(signature)

1000 LV. (signature)

NACHALNIK
(chief)(CACHET) KASIER
(cashier)

With these it is possible to make small purchases at booths in the camp.

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Inmates.

17. inmates of Belene camp Be-
- a. Kostadin Kirov Andonov,
- b. Nikola Bakalov,
- c. Nino Chakerski,
- d. Mincho Drandarevski,
- e. Colonel Georgiev,

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f. Nikolai Gichev,

g. Dimitr "Pop" Ignatov,

h. Ivan Khristov,

i. Konstantinov,

j. Yordan Kovachev

k. Lazar Lyochkov

l. Ivan Maslarov

m. Stoycho Mushanov

n. Spas Naidenov

o. Petr Rusev Peychev

p. Kiril Popov

q. Dimitur Serev

r. Georgi Shindarov

s. Kiro Smokov

t. Georgi Stoimenov

u. Khristo Stoyanov

v. Asen Surbinsky

w. Petur Surbinsky,

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x. General Vulkov

y. Sergi Zlatanov

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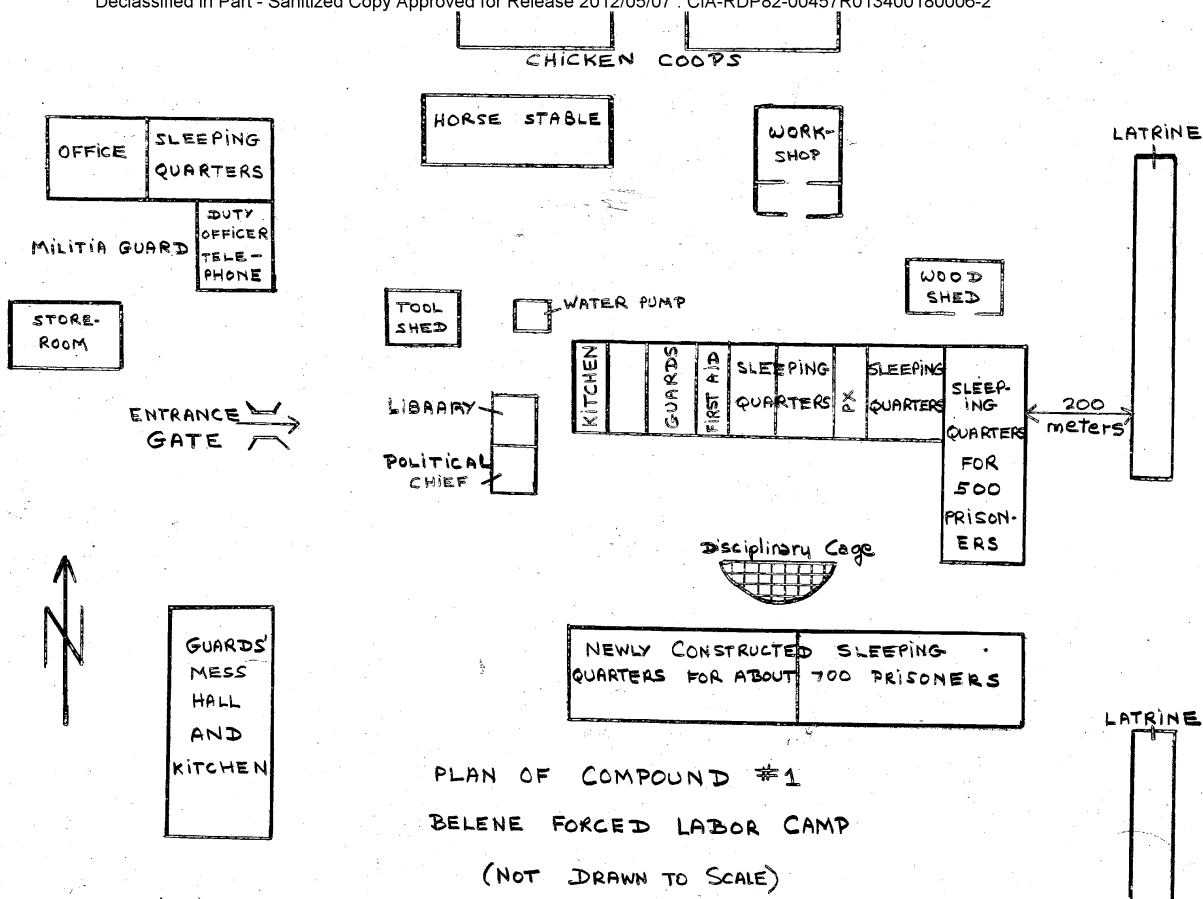
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LATRINE

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CLOTHING
STORE ROOM

TOOL
SHED

NEWLY CONSTRUCTED
SLEEPING QUARTERS

KITCHEN
BAKER

PRISONERS'
SLEEPING
QUARTERS

PRISONERS'
SLEEPING
QUARTERS
GUARDS
STORE-
ROOM
PX

PRISONERS GROUP II

FIRST AID

NEWLY CON-
STRUCTED
QUARTERS

SLEEPING QUARTERS

PRISONERS GROUP I
(behind barbed wire)

BARBED WIRE FENCE

Disciplinary
Dungeon

Disciplinary
Cage

QUARTERS FOR
MILITIA GUARDS
AND POLITICAL CHIEF

PLAN OF COMPOUND #2
BELENE FORCED LABOR CAMP
(Not Drawn to scale)

Buildings are about 3 meters high

Willow Grove in which
drinking and washing water obtained